

**Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District
14306 Park Avenue, Victorville, CA 92392
(760) 245-1661**

MEDIA RELEASE

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For further information contact:

Violette Roberts, Community Relations Manager
Mojave Desert AQMD (760) 245-1661 ext. 6104

AIR QUALITY SETTLEMENT FUNDS TO BENEFIT COPPER MOUNTAIN STUDENTS

Joshua Tree – In keeping with the spirit of Earth Day, the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) today awarded \$1,000 in air quality settlement funds to the Copper Mountain College (CMC) Foundation for use in providing environmental education scholarships to local students.

During today's ceremony, Town of Yucca Valley Councilman Bob Leone presented CMC President/Superintendent Jim Pulliam with four checks totaling \$1,000. The monies will be used by the Foundation to supplement a scholarship endowment fund used to award grants to CMC students majoring in environmental science or a related field.

According to Leone - who also serves as Chair of the MDAQMD's Governing Board - the scholarship program symbolizes the air district's "ongoing interest in giving back to the community we serve, and our commitment to providing educational opportunities to tomorrow's leaders."

Funds for the Mojave Desert Environmental Education Scholarship program originate from fines collected by the MDAQMD through the settlement of air quality violations in the region. During the course of settling enforcement actions with a regulatory air agency, a violator may agree to an alternative form of penalty known as a "Supplemental Environmental Project," as part of the settlement. Pursuant to policies set forth by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California EPA, environmental education scholarships are one type of project which may be funded with penalty monies collected under such an agreement.

Since its inception in 1998, the Mojave Desert Environmental Education Scholarship program has awarded more than \$100,000 to four community colleges located within the MDAQMD's jurisdiction and to California State University in San Bernardino. Of this total, approximately \$8,750 has been awarded to the CMC Foundation.

The MDAQMD is the local regulatory air agency for the High Desert portion of San Bernardino County and the City of Blythe in Riverside County.